DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 072 275 VT 018 759

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TITLE	A Study of the Vocational Needs of the Greenfield, Tennessee High School. A Mini-Grant Research Project. Research Series No. 12.
INSTITUTION	Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education, Knoxville.
PUB DATE	May 72
NOTE	30p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Needs; Educational Research; *Employment Opportunities; Facility Requirements; *Manpower Needs; Questionnaires; *School Surveys; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	Greenfield Tennessee High School

ABSTRACT

To determine the vocational-technical education needs of Greenfield High School (Tennessee), questionnaires were given to: (1) 25 percent of the voters of Greenfield, (2) each student in Grades 9-12, (3) parents of students in Grades 8-12, (4) each educator in Weakley County, and (5) each employer listed in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory. In addition, a survey of existing facilities was conducted and recommendations for building modifications were made by the surveyors. It was concluded that there was a definite need for vocational-technical education. Job opportunities warrant the teaching of more skills which would require additional classroom space and an additional building, for which there are not sufficient funds at this time. It was recommended that a general cooperative education program be introduced for the 1972-73 school year, with the funding coming from the state and local level. Sample questionnaires are appended. (Author/SB)

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ED 072275

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Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit

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Research Series No. 12

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A STUDY OF THE VOCATIONAL NEEDS

OF THE

GREENFIELD, TENNESSEE HIGH SCHOOL

A Mini-Grant Research Project
Presented to
The Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit

by
Jerry L. Moore

May 1972

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education, 909 Mountcastle Street, Knoxville, Tennessee, in cooperation with the University of Tennessee College of Education and the State Division of Vocational-Technical Education.

It has been prepared for distribution to selected agencies and individuals on a complimentary basis as permitted by funding under terms of the contract.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the vocational-technical education needs of Greenfield High School. In order to gather information about the problem, questionnaires were given to:

(1) twenty-five percent of the voters of Greenfield

(2) each student in grades 9-12

(3) all parents of students in grades 8-12

(4) each educator in Weakley County

(5) each employer listed in the Yellow Pages

The results of these questionnaires were analyzed to determine the needs and interests of vocational-technical education in Greenfield. In addition, a survey of existing facilities was conducted and recommendations for building modifications were made by the surveyors.

It was concluded that there was a definite need for vocational-technical education in Greenfield. Job opportunities warrant the teaching of more skills which would require additional classroom space and an additional building, for which, at this time, there are not sufficient funds.

Recommendations for the 1972-73 school year were for:

1. a general cooperative program at Greenfield High School with funds coming from the state and local level;
2. additional classroom space by the Weakley County Board of Education; and
3. addition of the courses indicated by the results of this study to begin in the fall of 1973.

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INTRODUCTION

In an approach to modern vocational-technical education, this project is an attempt to produce a suggested curriculum for vocational-technical education which is relevant to the needs of Greenfield High School. The type planning which this project suggests exists in no other phase of the school program at the present time.

Traditionally, educational programs reflect the needs of a society which has been outstripped by technological progress. There now exist educational needs which go beyond the home economics and the vocational agriculture class. This project is an attempt to make vocational-technical education a model for other educational programs in the schools.

Mathematics and science teachers have been teaching for years that there is a logical approach to problem solving which when followed results in a logical, rational solution to most problems (the scientific process). This project is an attempt to apply the simple scientific process of problem solution to the area of vocational-technical education.

In simplified form, the first step of the process is to identify the problem. The problem in this instance is the planning of a curriculum for vocational-technical education which will be relevant to the needs of Greenfield High School.

The second step, and one of the major objectives of the project, is to gather information about the problem. This step is the one phase in the process of traditional education which is most often treated poorly. The efforts of this project will be to make this step done well.

The third step is to consider the alternatives and select those which are most relevant to the solution of the problem. This will be completed in the analysis of the survey data collected from the questionnaires.

The fourth step is to devise a plan of action which will bring to fruition the solution of the problem. This will be the curriculum recommendations and the building surveys.

The fifth step is the testing of the plan. The Superintendent of Weakley County Schools has stated an interest in the vocational-technical education curriculum suggestions which will evolve from this study.

The sixth step in this cycle is evaluation. Only with a continuing program of evaluation of a program can a school system hope to supply its students with the needed skills in our ever-changing society.

This has been at best a distorted view of the scientific process and the benefits derived from its application, but the point is well made that by following the scientific process in this study, vocational-technical education can set the standards in curriculum planning.

Serving as a model for curriculum reform is only a second-order consequence when the full benefits of the study are realized. What could be more important to vocational-technical education than having people learn skills or bodies of knowledges which make them a functional part of their society?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the vocational-technical education needs of Greenfield High School.

RATIONALE

In looking at the statistics which gave an indication of the educational levels of the population of West Tennessee, one fact became quite evident. There was a basic need to increase the educational output in the area of vocational-technical education.

Some of the area statistics revealed that:

1. In the 1970-1971 school year, there were 47 high school graduates

in Greenfield High School. Of this number, 21 enrolled in state colleges and universities as freshmen from this area. (Greenfield High School)

2. Of the 47 high school graduates in the 1970-1971 school year in Greenfield High School, six entered vocational training schools. (Greenfield High School)
3. Of the fifth grade enrollment in the 1961-1962 school year, 65 (34%) graduated in 1969-1970 in Weakley County. (Tennessee Education Association, p. 32)
4. The median school years completed by persons 25 years and older in 1960 was 8.5% in Weakley County. (Tennessee Education Association, p. 29)
5. The effective buying income per household in 1968 was $6,637 in Weakley County. (Tennessee Education Association, p. 40)
6. The estimated personal income per capita in 1965 was $1,781 in Weakley County. (Tennessee Education Association, p. 37)

In light of these statistics, it was evident that there needed to be a vocational-technical education program in Greenfield High School which was geared to the needs of the noncollege-bound students in the area. As Johnson and Lowry stated:

> Vocational training includes programs which teach skills to the students as part of their high school curriculum and programs which either train or retrain adults already in the labor force. This training is vital to the District's development.
>
> Not only do higher skills increase the earnings potential of a worker, but industries tend to locate in an area where the needed skills either exist or can be developed.
>
> Although most of the industrial and commercial development within the District was occurring in the growth centers,

> employment opportunities were being created in all counties. Therefore, it was essential that all persons within the District were able to acquire skills that would facilitate employment. Little had been done up to this time, however, to provide good vocational training at the high school level. (Johnson and Lowry, p. 157)

Commenting on the areas of consideration for education in Tennessee, Dr. J. D. McComas, Dean of the College of Education at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, was quoted as saying:

> Tennessee has 500,000 adults over age 25 who are functionally illiterate. Another 600,000 have between an 8th and 12th grade education. They are evidence of the failure of our colleges. . .and the public schools for not providing and encouraging opportunities for them to be better educated.
>
> Some school systems in this area have enrollment in which nearly 50 percent of the students have never finished high school, and some schools have 30 to 40 percent of their teachers who do not have a college education. (Knoxville News-Sentinel, p. 35, Col. 1)

Vocational-technical education programs would do much to overcome these handicaps which were imposed by these lacks of student education and professional education.

From the literature and statistics cited, a need for planning in the field of vocational-technical education for Greenfield High School was evident.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this project were:

1. To determine the opinion of the residents of Greenfield, Tennessee toward vocational-technical education programs.
2. To determine the interests and occupational plans of the high school students of Greenfield, Tennessee.
3. To determine the interests of parents of students in vocational-technical education.
4. To determine the opinion of vocational-technical education held by educators.

5. To survey the employers of Weakley County to determine the employment opportunities within the County.
6. To plan a vocational-technical education curriculum for Greenfield High School.
7. To plan the needed facilities necessary to implement the curriculum recommendations.

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was mailed to twenty-five percent of the registered voters of Greenfield. The names were taken from the voter registration books of the City of Greenfield. (Appendix A) Then, a questionnaire was given to each student in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades in Greenfield High School. (Appendix B) In addition, a questionnaire was sent home to the parents of each student enrolled in the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades in Greenfield High School. (Appendix A)

A questionnaire was given to each educator in the high schools in Weakley County. (Appendix C) A questionnaire was also mailed to each employer in the county who was listed in the "Yellow Pages" of the local telephone directory. (Appendix D) Afterwards, the results of all of the questionnaires were analyzed by the faculty of the Greenfield High School to determine where the needs and interests were in vocational-technical education.

A survey of existing facilities was conducted and recommendations for building modifications made by the surveyors. The facility survey was to be completed either by an independent organization or by the faculty of the Greenfield High School. The duration of this project was from December 1, 1971 to May 1, 1972.

It is intended that the results of this study be used for curriculum development by the Weakley County Board of Education in proposing a program for use in Greenfield High School. The results of this study will be made available to all schools who might care to use them in implementing appropriate programs.

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Teacher's Questionnaire

This survey was completed by sixty county teachers (100% response). Seventy-eight percent said "yes" to placing more emphasis on vocational subjects and twenty-two percent said "no." Teachers also indicated by a response of 94% to 6% that they did not feel too much emphasis was being placed on vocational subjects at the present time.

Subjects suggested to be added to the curriculum are in order of responses and percent in the following:

		Responses	Percent
1.	Mechanics	21	15
2.	Cosmetology	20	14
3.	Electricity	13	9
4.	Practical Math	12	8
5.	Business Education	11	8
6.	Trade and Industry	11	8
7.	Distributive Education	11	8
8.	Shop Work	10	7
9.	Drafting	10	7
10.	Vocational English	5	3
11.	Vocational Home Economics	4	3
12.	Plumbing	3	2
13.	Modeling	3	2
14.	Art-Commercial	3	2
15.	Carpentry	2	1
16.	Dramatics	2	1
17.	Handicrafts	2	1
18.	Design	2	1

Student's Questionnaire

To determine the interests and occupational plans of the high school students of Greenfield, Tennessee, each student in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 was asked to complete a questionnaire about his future plans, occupations preferred, and subjects he would like to see added to the Greenfield High School curriculum.

Questionnaires were sent to 252 students. Responses were received from 214 (85%). Of the responses received, future plans after graduation were:

43%--------Go to college

21%--------Go to work

18%--------Go to vocational school

4%--------Go to business school

9%--------Others

100% Total

The types of occupations preferred by the students who responded and the percentages in which they were preferred are as follows:

Occupation	Percent
Mechanics	12
Teacher	9
Medical Technician	6
Undecided	6
Secretary	6
Nurse	6
Accountant	5
Engineer	5
Beautician	5
Factory Worker	4
Armed Service Career	4
Lawyer	3
Pharmacy	3
Commercial Art	3
Medical Doctor	3
Farmer	3
T.V. Repairman	2
Stewardess	2
Veterinarian	2

	Percent
Salesman	2
Dentist	2
Store Clerk	1
Model	1
Working with Handicapped	1
Computer	1
Conservation	1
Commercial Pilot	1
Electrician	1
Total	100

Of those surveyed, the subjects which they would like to see added to the curriculum were as follows:

Subject	Percent
Latin	18
French	13
Shorthand	12
Distributive Education	8
Trigonometry	5
Music	4
Drafting	4
Mechanical Drawing	4
Electronics	4
Typewriting	3
Sex Education	3
German	2
English Grammar	2
Drama	1
Ballet	1
Black History	1
Total	85

(This total of 85% plus 15% no response accounts for 100% of the survey.)

Parent's Questionnaire

To determine the opinion of the residents of Greenfield, Tennessee, toward vocational-technical education programs, a questionnaire was mailed to twenty-five percent of the registered voters of Greenfield (approximately 285 persons). A response was received from 262 persons or approximately 92%.

The educational level of the persons who responded to the questionnaire was as follows:

Educational Level	Percent
No high school	20
Some high school	20
High school	30
Some college	14
College graduate	5
Master's degree	1
Master's degree plus	2
Doctor's degree	0
No response	8
Total	100

The subjects most desired by those responding are listed in the order of their percentages of response.

Subject	Percent
Latin	19
French	16
Shorthand	10
Higher Mathematics	7
Work-study program	5
Music	2
Art	2
Band	2
No response	8
Total	69

It is noteworthy that of the 92% responding, not all of these had suggestions for additions of courses to the high school curriculum. The number of those who had no suggestions for additions plus those who made suggestions (less than 1% of the total) account for the remaining 31% omitted in the listing above.

Labor Questionnaire

Fifty questionnaires were mailed to businesses in the immediate area of Greenfield. There were thirty responses or a response of 60% of those contacted. Many did not respond because of the small business concern, variety, and their feeling that this survey would be of no value.

Of those responding there were 3,794 employees, 1,673 males and 2,121 females. For the indicated 150 immediate opportunities for employment, employers were not particularly interested in the employees having specific

training. However, they did express a need for welders, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, typists, bookkeepers, and machine operators.

The qualifications for employment were very minimal with only five percent specifying at least a high school education.

CONCLUSIONS

After a careful analysis of the foregoing questionnaires, the faculty of Greenfield High School agreed on the following conclusions:

1. There is a definite need for additional vocational subjects in the Greenfield High School.
2. Job opportunities in the Weakley County area exceeded general expectations and are great enough to warrant the teaching of more skills and vocations in order to help students secure these jobs.
3. As indicated by the results of these questionnaires, the greater percentage of those questioned are in agreement that there should be additional vocational subjects taught in the Greenfield High School.
4. It was agreed, also, that due to the widespread percentages and numerous subjects listed as desirable additions to the curriculum by specified groups, that no one subject would probably fit the needs of the majority of the school's students.
5. It was recognized that the addition of any new courses in the Greenfield High School would of necessity require additional classroom space and another building as there is no space currently available.
6. Due to heavy financial burdens encountered by Weakley County in constructing five new buildings and remodeling the rest of

the buildings in the county, any effort to secure additional classrooms has no chance of becoming a reality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The faculty of Greenfield High School, after much review and concerted effort, have reached a general recommendation on the additions to the curriculum at Greenfield High School.

Due to the fact that 18% of the students indicated that they planned to go to vocational school and 21% indicated that they planned to enter the work force, the evidence strongly favors of ing additional vocational courses in the Greenfield High School.

The labor questionnaires indicated that they needed welders, carpenters, plumbers, typists, bookkeepers, electricians, and machine operators. Although the labor surveys did not indicate a need for a number of highly trained personnel, they did tend to indicate that they wanted people with a skill or skills. There were indicated immediate openings for 150 employees and at least one local plant stated there would be expansion of their facilities in the next six months with the possibility of employing several hundred persons.

The parent's questionnaire was the least valid of all the results obtained. Although many indicated additional vocational subjects, their suggestions were for subjects such as foreign languages. It was felt that most of these parents were unaware of what a vocational program actually consists of and were indeed unaware of what <u>subjects</u> would compose vocational education.

The questionnaires sent to the teachers were answered by 100% of those receiving them and due to their experience and training as teachers a greater emphasis was given to their opinions. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers felt that more emphasis should be placed on vocational subjects in the high

schools of Weakley County. There were eighteen different subjects which the teachers thought should be added to the curriculum.

Due to the wide variety of subjects requested, the lack of additional space, and the consideration that to serve the needs of one student might be to the detriment of another, the faculty of Greenfield High School recommends:

(1) That for the 1972-1973 school year a general cooperative education program be introduced in the Greenfield High School, with the funding for the program coming from the state and local level. It is felt that local businesses would have more available resources to offer to individuals with a variety of vocational education backgrounds than to any one large group. In this way, a number of these requests for additional subjects could be realized.

(2) That the Weakley County Board of Education acquire additional classroom space and add to the curriculum such courses as are indicated by the results of this study with introduction of the first courses to begin in the fall of 1973.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

PARENT & VOTER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name_____

2. Address_____

3. Occupation_____

4. Employer_____

5. Education of interviewee: (Check highest level attained)

____1. No high school
____2. Some high school
____3. High School
____4. Some college
____5. College graduate
____6. Master's degree
____7. Master's degree plus
____8. Doctor's degree

6. What subject or subjects do you feel need to be added to the program at Greenfield High School?

7. Why do you feel that these subject or subjects are needed?

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name_____

Grade_____

I. After graduation I plan to: (check one)

_____Go to college

_____Go to vocational school

_____Go to work

_____Go to business school

_____Other (please list)

_____

_____

II. What type of occupation would you prefer? Please be specific.

III. What subject or subjects would you like to see added to the Greenfield High School schedule?

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Name_____

Subjects taught:_____

I. Do you feel more emphasis should be placed on vocational subjects in the high school?

_____yes _____no

II. If question above is yes what subjects would you suggest be added to those present in your school system?

III. Do you feel that too much emphasis is being placed on vocational subjects at the present time? yes_____ no_____

IV. If question above is yes, what subjects do you feel need to be deleted from your school system?

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE

Date_____

1. Name of firm_____Address_____

2. Type of business_____

3. Person contacted_____Title_____

4. Number employees_____Male_____Female_____

5. What are the opportunities for employment in occupations involving vocational knowledge and skills? (Summarize below)

Job Title or Type of Position	No. Now Employed		Additional No. Needed		Approx. Salary Range
	Male	Female	Male	Female	

6. Do you have need for better trained employees?
   Estimated number_____
   Types_____

7. Would you be interested in present employees receiving additional training? _____

8. Indicate types of training desired_____

   _____

   _____

9. What educational qualifications do you require for new employees?
   No. Minimum_____8th Grade_____High School_____College_____Special Training_____

10. Do you require previous work experience for beginning employees?_____

11. Do you anticipate any increase in employment?_____Types_____

12. Do you have much turn-over of workers_____ % of turn-over_____
    No. of turn-over_____

13. Comments and specific suggestions.

APPENDIX E

Mr. Larry W. Sanders
Regional Research and
Development Coordinator
Research Coordinating Unit
Park Century Building
Jackson, TN 38301

Dear Mr. Sanders:

The enclosed document constitutes an effort to determine the vocational-technical education needs of Greenfield High School. I hope that the information contained herein meets with your approval.

The total amount of expenses incurred while researching this study was $500.00.

If there are any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jerry L. Moore

Jerry L. Moore